

We Claim:

1. A method of operating a programmable washing machine, the washing machine having a drum mounted for rotation in a stationary suds container about a tilted axis of rotation rising towards a loading opening of the washing machine, the drum having scooping mechanisms for suds mounted thereto, the scooping mechanisms having a scooping power depending on a direction of rotation of the drum and being configured for uniformly wetting a laundry with the suds upon rotation of the drum in a given scooping direction, the method which comprises:

driving the drum during a wet processing phase in alternating directions of rotation at speeds that alternates in dependence on the direction of rotation for a respectively limited time period, and the respectively limited time period is variable in both directions of rotation, and thereby:

driving the drum in the scooping direction for time intervals that are equally long and that are characterized by a uniform setpoint speed of the drum during the entire wet processing phase; and

driving the drum in an opposite direction and varying the speed and the time intervals in dependence on a progress of the wet processing phase, by:

in a first phase, setting the drum speed in the scooping direction to below a washing speed, setting the duration of the time interval in a direction counter to the scooping direction substantially shorter than the duration in the scooping direction;

in a second phase, setting the drum speed to equal the drum speed as in the first phase, and setting the duration of the interval in the direction counter to the scooping direction longer than in the first phase; and

in a third phase, setting the drum speed in the scooping direction to equal the drum speed in the first and second phases, but markedly above a contact speed at which items of laundry contact the drum shell in the opposite direction, and setting a duration of the time interval in the opposite direction markedly shorter than in the second phase.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the first phase is a wetting phase, the second phase is a washing phase, and the third phase is a rinsing phase.

3. The method according to claim 1, which comprises alternating the scooping direction and the opposite direction multiple times during the wet processing phase.

4. The method according to claim 1, which comprises determining a load on the drum generated by the laundry, and automatically adjusting at least one of a length of the time period in the scooping direction and a length of the time period in the direction counter to scooping in accordance with the load.

5. A washing machine, comprising:

a program control device programmed to carry out the method according to claim 1;

a timer providing output signals to the program control device for controlling the drum drive, the signals defining periods that are adjustable in dependence on program steps and/or process parameters measured during the wet processing phase.

6. A software product, comprising program-executable code for a control device of a programmable washing machine, the program-executable code programming the control device to perform the method according to claim 1.